

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented system for displaying graphical indicators instead of data in a field, comprising:

a user interface for generating condition structures in response to receiving graphical indicator conditions, the condition structures defining a relationship between the data, the graphical indicator conditions, and the corresponding graphical indicators;

a graphical indicator engine, responsive to the graphical indicator conditions in the condition structures for the field for comparing the data to the graphical indicator conditions, the graphical indicator engine operative to output a display signal in response to the graphical condition matching the data; and

a display, responsive to the display signal, for replacing the data in the field with the graphical indicator identified by the condition structure.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the display comprises a memory storage for storing information that determines whether a field is capable of supporting display of graphical indicators.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the graphical indicator engine comprises a memory storage for storing the condition structures and associated graphical indicator IDs that determine the graphical indicators to be displayed.

4. The computer-implemented method for displaying graphical indicators instead of data in a field, comprising the steps of:

obtaining a display signal and graphical indicator conditions that determine when to display graphical indicators;

5 converting the graphical indicator conditions into condition structures that define a relationship between the data, the graphical indicator conditions, and the corresponding graphical indicators;

comparing the data to the graphical indicator conditions retrieved from the condition structures to determine if there is a match; and

10 displaying the graphical indicator or the data depending on the outcome of the data compared to the graphical indicator conditions.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of obtaining graphical indicator conditions further comprises the steps of:

15 requesting an option to set the graphical indicator conditions;

displaying graphical indicator condition options from which the user can choose;

determining if the condition structures exist by checking a memory storage;

converting the existing condition structures back into graphical indicator condition text;

20 displaying the graphical indicator condition text so that the user can understand the existing graphical indicator conditions; and

modifying the graphical indicator conditions by allowing the user to change or add to the existing graphical indicator condition text.

6. The method claim 5, wherein the step of modifying the graphical indicator conditions further comprises the step of:

25 determining if a user is finished entering the graphical indicator conditions by asking the user to indicate when the user is finished.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of comparing the data to the graphical indicator conditions further comprises the step of:

30 comparing the data in a prioritized order.

8. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of displaying the graphical indicator or the data includes the steps of:

determining if there are more fields to test whether to display the graphical indicators;

filling a cache with the display signal that indicates whether to display a graphical indicator; and

for each field, displaying text data or a graphical indicator based on the display signal in the cache.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said step of determining if there are more fields comprises the steps of:

determining if there are more rows by asking if there is another row in a grid of data; and

determining if there are more columns by asking if there is another column in each row in the grid of data.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein said step of filling a cache with the display signal comprises the steps of:

determining if the cache exists;

creating the cache if the cache does not exist; and

filling the cache with the display signal indicating whether or not graphical indicators should be displayed in the field.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein said step of displaying text data or a graphical indicator comprises the steps of:

determining if the field is a task field or resource field by obtaining a field type;

obtaining the task type of the task field or the resource type of the resource field;

determining the graphical indicator conditions for the task type or resource type;

storing the graphical indicator conditions;

allowing the user to add more graphical indicator conditions;

comparing the data values to the graphical indicator conditions to find a matching graphical indicator ID;

retrieving the matching graphical indicator ID; and

displaying the graphical indicator associated with the matching graphical indicator ID.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said task type comprises a project summary task type, a summary task type, and a nonsummary task type and said resource type comprises a summary resource type and a nonsummary resource type.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of determining the graphical indicator conditions for the task type comprises obtaining task conditions for the project summary task type, the summary task type, and the nonsummary task type and the step of determining the graphical indicator conditions for the resource type comprises obtaining resource conditions for the summary resource type and the nonsummary resource type.

14. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:
validating the graphical indicator conditions.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of validating the graphical indicator conditions includes the steps of:

validating test data by determining if the test data equals a pre-defined operation;

validating value data by determining if the value data is a legitimate field name or legitimate data; and

validating image data by determining if the image data is equal to pre-defined image data.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of validating the value data comprises the steps of:

determining if the value data is a field name or data;

if the value data is a field name, determining if the field type is legitimate; and

if the value data is data, determining if the data is legitimate.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of validating the graphical indicator conditions further comprises the step of:

displaying an error message when an error is found in the graphical indicator conditions.

18. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:
storing the condition structures and the associated graphical indicator IDs that determine
the graphical indicators to be displayed.

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19. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:
displaying the data when hovering over the graphical indicators.

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